

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1573

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION USNATO

USMISSION USUN

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USDOCOSOUTH

USCINCEUR

DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 1441

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT CY GR

SUBJECT: CLERIDES STAYS ON

REF: A. FBIS TA 191959Z (NOTAL)

B. NICOSIA 1339

1. SUMMARY: CLERIDES' APRIL 19 ANNOUNCEMENT THAT HE WILL GO TO VIENNA AS NEGOTIATOR CLOSES LATEST RESIGNATION "CRISIS". CLERIDES REMAINS TIED TO "COMMON LINE" BUT APPEARS TO BE EM-POWERED DISCUSS TURK BIZONALITY PROPOSALS. GREEK CYPRIOT WATCH-WORD IS NOW FOR HARMONY IN RANKS ON EVE VIENNA. END SUMMARY.

2. APRIL 19 CLERIDES ISSUED LENGTHY STATEMENT (REF A) THAT HE WOULD NOT RESIGN AS NEGOTIATOR. HE CLAIMED THERE NO DIFFERENCE IN GREEK LEADERSHIP RE HIS WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS BASED ON ATHENS-NICOSIA "COMMON LINE", OR ON SOLUTION TO BE PURSUED. AS EVIDENCE, HE CITED (A) APRIL 10 KARAMANLIS LETTER RE NEED "FOR RAPID EFFORT TO ACHIEVE SOLUTION
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THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS", (B) CORRECT INTERPRETATION" OF MAKARIOS

POSITION ON LONG-TERM STRUGGLE" -- I. E., THAT THIS STEP CANNOT BE PRECLUDED IF REPEAT IF TURKS REMAIN INTRANSIGENT. CLERIDES ACKNOWLEDGED DISAGREEMENT HAD ARISEN OVER EFFORT BY "CERTAIN CLERGYMEN AND LAY PERSONS" (UNNAMED) TO SPREAD NOTION (WHICH CONTRARY TO "COMMON LINE") THAT DECISION HAD BEEN MADE TO CARRY OUT "LONG-TERM STRUGGLE" AND THEREFORE THAT PERSONS FAVORING REALISTIC ASSESSMENT OF SITUATION SHOULD BE REMOVED FROM POLITICS.

3. LOOKING AHEAD TO VIENNA TALKS, AND BASED ON DECISION FROM RECENT MEETING OF NATIONAL COUNCIL AND COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, CLERIDES SAID HE WOULD INSIST ON FEBRUARY PROPOSALS (FOR MULTIREGIONAL FEDERATION) BUT "WOULD ALSO EXAMINE TURK PROPOSALS." HE DECLARED THAT TALKS WOULD COLLAPSE IN "TWO HOURS" IF EACH SIDE INSISTED THAT ONLY ITS RESPECTIVE PROPOSALS BE DISCUSSED.

4. CLERIDES EXPRESSED THANKS TO ARCHBISHOP FOR "FORTHRIGHT STATEMENT" IN DEFENSE OF HIS CHARACTER (REF B), AND TO COME PRESS, "THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE" WHO HAD PRAISED HIS COURAGE, EFFORT TO ENLIGHTEN PUBLIC.

5. NOW THAT RESIGNATION ISSUE SETTLED, CLERIDES' SHRILLER OPPONENTS HAVE TONED DOWN CRITICISMS, THOUGH DEEP SUSPICIONS REMAIN. LOWER TONE OF DEBATE ACCORDS WITH NEW GOC WATCHWORD ON UNITY IN GREEK CYPRIOT RANKS ON EVE OF VIENNA ROUND.

A. LYSSARIDES, IN LAST WEEK'S PRESS CONFERENCE, AVOIDED POLEMICS AGAINST CLERIDES, THOUGH TA NEA WARNED APRIL 22 THAT GREEK SIDE WILL NOT DISCUSS TURK PROPOSALS AS "BASIS FOR SOLUTION."

B. RABIDLY PRO-MAKARIOS ELEFATHEROS LAOS APRIL 19 GRATIFIED THAT CLERIDES HAS RETURNED TO "COMMON LINE", BUT URGED THAT RELIABLE DELEGATION ACCOMPANY HIM TO VIENNA TO ASSURE HE DOESN'T STRAY OFF AGAIN.

6. COMMENT: CLERIDES' LATEST RESIGNATION BALLOON HAD BEGUN TO DEFLATE LONG BEFORE APRIL 19. PUBLIC HAD LOST CONFIDENTIAL

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INTEREST, AND CLERIDES HIMSELF HAD LOST ZEAL FOR FIGHT; HE ACCEPTED RATHER PASSIVELY CONSENSUS FROM COUNCIL OF MINISTERS/NATIONAL COUNCIL; HIS OWN PAPER LARGELY IGNORED HIS THREAT TO RESIGN.

7. WITH APRIL 19 STATEMENT, CLERIDES TRIED TO UNTANGLE HIMSELF FROM HIS MOST RECENT PUBLIC SNARL WITH ARCHBISHOP. ON BALANCE, HE HAS GAINED VERY LITTLE FROM APRIL 1 SPEECH AND AFTERMATH. HE

IS STILL TIED TO "COMMON LINE"; HE STILL MUST PUSH FOR MULTI-REGIONAL FEDERATION. MAKARIOS AND KARMANLIS TURNED DOWN PRE-VIENNA SUMMIT, THOUGH THEY APPEAR TO HAVE EMPOWERED CLERDIES TO "EXAMINE" TURK BIZONALITY PROPOSALS. THAT MAY BE ENOUGH, BARELY, TO KEEP INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS ALIVE.

8. IF HISTORY IS ANY GUIDE, NEWEST BLUSH OF UNITY IN GREEK CYPRIOT RANKS AND SURCEASE OF VITRIOL AGAINST EACH OTHER WILL BE AS EVANESCENT AS THIS, THE LATEST BUT PROBABLY NOT THE LAST, CLERIDES RESIGNATION" CRISIS". END COMMENT.
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